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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT
FRIDAY, JUNE 15, 2007

In Today's Papers

Gul Criticizes Iraqi Reluctance to Act against the PKK
All papers report the second international "Democracy and Global Security Conference" kicked off in Istanbul Thursday with the participation of interior ministers, police chiefs and academics from 80 countries. Foreign Minister Abdullah Gul addressed the conference and said that Turkey tries everything it can to contribute to the security and stability of Iraq, but Iraqi authorities "do nothing to prevent PKK activities within their borders. The PKK's terrorist actions have sped up again, because this organization finds shelter in the north of Iraq. Turkish security forces seized two tons of plastic explosives brought in from Iraq over the past year," Gul emphasized, voicing expectation that the Iraqi government will control its borders. Gul stated the coalition forces in Iraq should handle border security in case the Iraqi government cannot, and if neither side can do it, they should cooperate with "the countries which can do the job."

Meanwhile, mainstream Hurriyet reports William James (Billy) Hayes, whose time in a Turkish jail inspired Alan Parker's 1978 movie "Midnight Express," came to Istanbul. The Turkish Security Directorate said Hayes, 60, came with a special permission to attend the security conference and would leave the country June 18.

In addition, Hurriyet reports Lee Baca, the Los Angeles County Sheriff who released Paris Hilton from prison early, also came to Istanbul for the conference. Baca told Hurriyet the release of Hilton was legal, adding that the Daily Mail newspaper which accused him of having acted inappropriately was "not a real newspaper but entertainment in print." Baca also rejected charges that he received financial support for his election campaign from Hilton's grandfather William Barron Hilton. That's hot.

Erdogan Invites Maliki to Turkey
Mainstream Milliyet reports Prime Minister Erdogan said Thursday he invited the Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki to visit Ankara,

adding that he was waiting for a response from Baghdad. Erdogan has met with Iraq's President Talabani, and said recently he will not meet Barzani. Erdogan said he had no information regarding President Bush phoning Barzani on Wednesday, during which, according to the Turkish press, the President expressed Washington's support for the democratic process in Iraq. With an invitation extended to al-Maliki, Turkey's Iraq policy is seen to be "moving from the border toward Ankara," says Milliyet.

US Helicopters Watch Turkish Moves on Iraq Border
Milliyet, Sabah, Aksam and Zaman report American helicopters watched Turkish military tank movements on the border with Iraq near the Habur crossing Thursday, flying low along the border, but without crossing into the Turkish side.

Meanwhile, papers report the Turkish military has shelled the southern part of the Cudi Mountain in the Sirnak province, and in operations backed by helicopters troops were hunting PKK militants on the Gabar Mountain, the northern part of the Cudi Mountain.

Editorial Commentary on Northern Iraq
Hakan Ayyun wrote in the conservative daily Bugun (6/15): "Even though there is, in fact, a need for a cross border operation in northern Iraq to eliminate the PKK terrorists, there is the other side of the coin: terrorists inside Turkey. By pointing out that Turkey must cope with terrorists inside first, PM Erdogan has become the most courageous political figure who could break the taboo on this issue. Whenever we fail to handle an issue, to prevent rational discussion it has always been the case. Someone says, 'The problem stems from outside' as the primary tactic for turning a problem into a taboo. For the Kurdish issue, the same tactical lie was implemented. 'This is a problem provoked by the US and EU. Otherwise, we would have no problem with our Kurds' has become a

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prevailing rhetoric. Some wanted the people of Turkey to pretend as if terrorists are living in the US or in EU countries. The bare truth is that we cannot gain full control of our borders. Finally PM Erdogan acted with leadership and expressed the fact that we must solve the problem inside first."

Ruhat Mengi wrote in the mainstream daily Vatan (6/15): "It was reported that the US has taken action [regarding the PKK] and President Bush called Massoud Barzani in that regard. President Bush in their conversation reportedly talked about bilateral cooperation against terrorism with Barzani. Barzani in return expressed his thanks, and he should be very thankful indeed. Because there seems to be something wrong. If Bush was acting genuinely, with sincere intentions, he should have called Turkey instead and express his commitment to fight against terrorism together. And he should have called Barzani only to say 'stop sending our weapons to Turkey through terrorists, otherwise, we can't even save you.' Given the fact that the US provides by air food supplies to the terrorist organization, it would be very difficult for President Bush to say that [to Barzani]."

Zebari Calls for Turkey-Iraq-US Dialogue on the PKK
Hurriyet, Milliyet, Radikal, Cumhuriyet, Zaman and others report Iraqi Foreign Minister Hoshiyar Zebari urged Ankara on Thursday for dialogue to deal with the PKK militants inside Iraq. "This dialogue should involve the Turkish and Iraqi governments, the US and the regional Kurdish government in northern Iraq," Zebari told a meeting of the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) in New York. He said Turkey was reluctant to do that, pushing instead for bilateral talks with the US on the issue. The Iraqi FM also said he was "really encouraged" by Prime Minister Erdogan signaling Tuesday that Turkey should focus on fighting the PKK at home rather than in northern Iraq.

DTP Concerned of Terrorist Killings, Elections
Radikal, Cumhuriyet and Yeni Safak report a statement released yesterday by Turkey's main Kurdish party, DTP, claimed that the recent increase in the funerals of "martyred security forces" occurred because of non-compliance to the "unilaterally declared ceasefire." "Operations continue at full speed, bringing the deaths of young people every day. It is extremely saddening that peace

efforts that had been ongoing for seven years came to this point," according to the statement. It also criticized a recent Turkish General Staff (TGS) statement that invited the nation to display a united reaction against terror, saying the call will legitimize lynching attempts against Kurds. The DTP also said the door of parliament was closed to "left, labor, and the Kurds," voicing concern that the upcoming general elections will not be held on "democratic and sound" grounds.

Putin Will Join BSEC Summit in Istanbul

Leftist-nationalist Cumhuriyet reports Russian President Vladimir Putin will participate in the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) meeting to be held in Istanbul June 25. Armenian Foreign Minister Vartan Oskanian will also join the meeting. The conference will debate security, illegal migration and smuggling in the region, and will deprive the US of its justifications for intervening in the Black Sea region, according to the paper. President Sezer will host the summit and the heads of state of Bulgaria, Romania, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and Georgia will also participate.

TV Highlights

NTV, 7.00 A.M.

Domestic News

- A bomb exploded at a bus station used by military and civilian buses in the mainly Kurdish southeastern city of Diyarbakir on Friday, injuring four civilians and a soldier.

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- Council of State (Danistay) ruled to remove from office Abdullah Demirbas, the mayor of Sur municipality in Diyarbakir, for using languages other than Turkish in municipal transactions. The municipality has been providing services in Turkish, Kurdish, English and Syriac.

- Turkish Land Forces will buy 336 landmine sensitive NATO-standard armored vehicles which also have high sensors and radars.

- Selahattin Ozel, the head of Alevi federations in Turkey, says Alevis will not vote for the AKP because it is working towards the establishment of an Islamic state.

International News

- In Iraq, 10 Sunni mosques were attacked on Thursday following the Wednesday bombing of Al-Askariya Mosque, a major Shiite Muslim shrine in Samarra.

- Nicosia has lodged a complaint against Turkey at the EU, saying Turkey blocks Greek Cypriot membership in international organizations.

- According to newly adopted legislation, travelers entering or leaving the EU with 10,000 Euro or more in cash will be forced to declare it at customs.

- The Vatican suspended all financial aid to Amnesty International for backing abortion, calling on all Catholics to stop donations to the organization.

WILSON